



# HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

## CERTIFICATION DIRECTIVE

*(NFPA 472 2013 Edition)*

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## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS DIRECTIVE OVERVIEW

The Hazardous Materials certification directive is based on industry standards and was developed to provide Alaska fire service agencies with a method to attain knowledge and skills for hazardous materials response activities. The directive is referenced to [NFPA 472](#), *Standard for Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction Incidents*, 2013 edition, and is intended to provide a standard level of hazardous materials training using nationally and locally approved job performance requirements.

The International Fire Service Accreditation Congress ([IFSA](#)) and National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications ([ProBoard](#)) grant accreditation to the Alaska Fire Standards Council ([AFSC](#)) for various levels. Certification seals apply to Hazardous Materials Awareness, Operations, and Technician levels. Training for each level is typically available through BFAST accredited fire department/industry programs. Upon completion of training the AFSC administers a practical and written examination to ensure candidates for certification have met the requisite knowledge and skill requirements referenced to the NFPA standard.

## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS DIRECTIVE LEVELS

### **Hazardous Materials Awareness (HMA)**

Awareness level personnel shall be persons who, in the course of their normal duties, could encounter an emergency involving hazardous materials/weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and who are expected to recognize the presence of the hazardous materials/WMD, protect themselves, call for trained personnel, and secure the area. Awareness level personnel shall be trained to meet all competencies of NFPA 472, Chapter 4.

### **Hazardous Materials Operations (HMO)**

The operations level responder shall be that person who responds to hazardous materials/weapons of mass destruction (WMD) incidents for the purpose of protecting nearby persons, the environment, or property from the effects of the release. The operations level responder shall be trained to meet all competencies at the awareness level and the competencies of NFPA 472, Chapter 5, and mission specific competencies under 6.2 and 6.6.

### **Hazardous Materials Technician (HMT)**

The technician level responder shall be that person who responds to hazardous materials/weapons of mass destruction (WMD) incidents using a risk-based response process by which they analyze a problem involving hazardous materials/WMD, select applicable decontamination procedures, and control a release using specialized protective clothing and control equipment. The technician level responder shall be trained to meet all competencies at the awareness/operations level and the competencies of NFPA 472, Chapter 7.

## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

### **Hazardous Materials Awareness (HMA)**

- a. applicant must be at least 18 years of age, and;
- b. applicant must be an Alaska resident or member of an organized fire department/emergency response organization registered with the Division of Fire and Life Safety, and;
- c. \*successfully complete an AFSC/BFAST approved HMA course, and;
- d. \*successfully complete the AFSC written HMA examination with a minimum score of 70%, and;

### **Hazardous Materials Operations (HMO)**

- a. applicant must be an Alaska resident or member of an organized fire department/emergency response organization registered with the Division of Fire and Life Safety, and;
- b. applicant must meet all requirements for HMA (*NFPA 472 Chapter 4*);
- c. \*successfully complete an AFSC/BFAST approved HMO course, and;
- d. \*successfully complete the AFSC written HMO examination with a minimum score of 70%, and;
- e. \*successfully complete the AFSC practical HMO examination.

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## Hazardous Materials Technician (HMT)

- a. applicant must be an Alaska resident or member of an organized fire department/emergency response organization registered with the Division of Fire and Life Safety, and;
- b. applicant must meet all requirements for HMA (*NFPA 472 Chapter 4*); and,
- c. applicant must meet all requirements for HMO (*NFPA 472 Chapter 5, 6.2 and 6.6*); and
- d. \*successfully complete an AFSC/BFAST approved HMO course, and;
- e. \*successfully complete the AFSC written HMO examination with a minimum score of 70%, and;
- f. \*successfully complete the AFSC practical HMT examination.

*\*Note: For each level listed the course requirement and the final examination requirement must be completed within **three years** of application date and must meet NFPA 472 core requirements.*

## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS COURSES

To be eligible to take the certification exam for Hazardous Materials, applicants must meet the prerequisite levels of certification and must have completed an approved training course. Training courses are offered through BFAST, or, through fire department training programs that have been accredited by BFAST before the course start date. A Hazardous Materials course must meet the applicable knowledge and skill requirements as referenced in NFPA 472, 2013 edition. Fire departments or organizations conducting a BFAST approved course must submit a **Test Notification** through [AK IMPACT](#) and follow the requirements of the [Training Program Accreditation Manual](#). Accredited entities deliver these courses throughout Alaska in various approved locations.

## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS EXAMINATIONS

The Fire Standards Council has developed a written examination test bank for each level of certification. The Hazardous Materials Awareness only examination has 25 questions total; the Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations examination has 100 questions total, and the Hazardous Materials Technician examination has 100 questions total. Hazardous Materials certification examinations are typically administered immediately following an approved course. For certificate issuance, written examinations must be completed with a score of 70% or higher.

In cases where an individual is eligible to test, but is not able to test with a group, examinations *may* be mailed to an approved AFSC Certifying Officer (CO) upon request. If a CO is not available in the local community, the AFSC office *may* authorize the exam to be mailed to an approved Proctor in the applicant's community. Administration of certification examinations must be in accordance with the AFSC [Certification Policy Manual](#).

Exam distribution procedures shall follow the Test Examination Security Plan specified in the [Certification Policy Manual](#). Examinations must be completed returned to the AFSC office in accordance with the manual guidelines and timeframes.

For individuals with reasonable access to the AFSC office local staff will proctor written examinations. Examinations **shall not** be sent directly to the individual taking the exam. The AFSC office will grade all certification examinations and notify the applicant of final scores.

## Hazardous Materials Awareness Only - Written Examinations

An individual must have documentation of completion of an approved Hazardous Materials Awareness training course to initiate the testing process. The AFSC will only accept Hazardous Materials Awareness written testing applicants if he or she is affiliated with an Alaska fire department or organization with an accredited fire service training program for the level of the test request. All test requests must be coordinated through the fire department the individual is affiliated with. The fire department Training Officer/Training Program Manager has the responsibility to verify the applicant meets the requirements for testing and must complete and sign-off a Hazardous Materials Awareness Only Training Record before the applicant is eligible to complete an AFSC certification exam.

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Applicants that are endorsed by a Training Officer/Training Program Manager can complete an approved hazardous materials awareness only written examination locally as stated above.

A candidate **is not** permitted to take the written final exam without the explicit preapproval of the AFSC office *and* the agency that is authorized for the exam. To test the candidate must provide the following to the AFSC office :

1. a completed [Application for Certification](#) signed by the Fire Chief/Training Officer/Training Program Manager he or she is affiliated with
2. a copy of legal photo ID (state driver's license, state ID, passport, etc)
3. a completed training record signed off by the candidate's Training Officer/Training Program Manager

Once preapproval is received from the AFSC the test will be scheduled by the Training Officer/Training Program Manager in IMPACT.

### **Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations Written Examination References**

- a. NFPA 472: *Standard for Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction Incidents*, 2013 edition
- b. Text (either of the following)
  - IFSTA, *Hazardous Materials for First Responders*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition
  - Jones and Bartlett Learning, *Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations*, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition

Supplemental sources for Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations Instructional Materials (these texts could be a source for instructors to supplement learning material). The AFSC final certification examinations do not correlate with supplemental source materials and the AFSC **does not** recommend using these as a stand-alone preparation for final written examination:

- IFSTA, *Essentials of Fire Fighting and Fire Department Operations*, 6th Edition
- Jones and Bartlett Learning, *Fundamentals of Fire Fighter Skills*, 3rd Edition

### **Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations Practical Skills Evaluation References**

- a. NFPA 472: *Standard for Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction Incidents*, 2013 edition
- b. [Hazardous Materials Operations Practical Skills Evaluation Sheets](#)

Additional sources required for practical application:

- Department of Transportation, *Emergency Response Guidebook*, 2012 edition

### **Hazardous Materials Technician Written Examination References**

- a. NFPA 472: *Standard for Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction Incidents*, 2013 edition
- b. Text
  - Jones and Bartlett Learning, *Hazardous Materials: Managing the Incident*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition

### **Hazardous Materials Technician Practical Skills Evaluation References**

- a. NFPA 472: *Standard for Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction Incidents*, 2013 edition
- b. [Hazardous Materials Technician Practical Skills Evaluation Sheets](#)

Additional sources required for practical application:

- Department of Transportation, *Emergency Response Guidebook*, 2012 edition

## **RECIPROCITY/EQUIVALENCY CHALLENGE**

Refer to the AFSC [Certification Policy Manual](#) for the requirements under each of these processes.

## **BACKGROUND CHECKS**

A background check is not required for certification at the Hazardous Materials Awareness or Operations level.

## **RECERTIFICATION**

AFSC Hazardous Materials Awareness, Operations, and Technician certification does not expire. It is the responsibility of the individual to maintain knowledge and skill requirements after the certification examination is completed.

## **PREVIOUS ALASKA HAZARDOUS MATERIALS CERTIFICATION/GRANDFATHER CERTIFICATION**

The Alaska Fire Standards Council recognizes all previous State of Alaska certifications issued for Hazardous Materials Awareness or Operations through the Division of Fire and Life Safety (formerly Division of Fire Prevention).

Due to ongoing changes with NFPA certification standards, grandfather requests for IFSAC seals are limited. For individuals that received certification prior to initial State of Alaska IFSAC accreditation, the AFSC policy for "Grandfather" certification with an IFSAC seal will expire upon the adoption of the third NFPA standard revision after the individual's initial certification was issued.

This clause does not prohibit an individual that was certified in Alaska prior to 2001 from receiving an IFSAC seal. Individual IFSAC seal requests for a certificate issued three or more revisions ago must successfully complete a current written and practical test before issuance of an IFSAC seal.